

# Celebrating 50 Years of Helping Virginians Attain Quality, Affordable Housing

## **Virginia Housing**

Communications: Special Event Marketing

### **HFA Staff Contact**

Adrian Robinett

[adrian.robinett@virginiahousing.com](mailto:adrian.robinett@virginiahousing.com)

VIRGINIA HOUSING

# 2023 NCSHA Award Submission

ENTRY CATEGORY:

**Communications – Special Event Marketing**

ENTRY NAME:

**Virginia Housing: Celebrating 50 Years  
of Helping Virginians Attain Quality,  
Affordable Housing**



*“We are proud to celebrate 50 years of serving Virginians and their communities. It has been an incredible journey since we first opened our doors in 1972 as an independent, self-supporting housing finance agency – a journey that continues today as we work together to make Virginia an even greater, more affordable place to call home.”*

– Susan Dewey, Chief Executive Officer

## Brief Description

---

By investing in the power of home, Virginia Housing transforms where and how thousands of Virginians live and thrive, strengthening communities and the economy. Founded in 1972 as the Virginia Housing Development Authority (VHDA), Virginia Housing is celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> year of working in partnership with the public and private sectors to help Virginians attain quality, affordable housing. While receiving no state taxpayer dollars, Virginia Housing raises money in capital markets to provide mortgages to first-time homebuyers, financing for rental developments and neighborhood revitalization efforts. Virginia Housing invests in innovations in affordable housing, and makes homes for people with disabilities and older Virginians more livable.

### The Plan and Strategy

The Communications team constructed a strategic plan for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary campaign with a goal to increase internal and external awareness about this milestone anniversary. We included associates, partners, media and the general public as a part of our engagement plan.

### Marketing and Public Relations

- **Campaign Branding:** The campaign was launched using an internally created logo specifically for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. This logo was used in place of our standard Virginia Housing logo on all marketing materials, stationary, social media profile photos, event banners and signage for the duration of the anniversary year.
- **Webpage Creation:** [VirginiaHousing.com/Celebrate50](http://VirginiaHousing.com/Celebrate50) was created to launch the campaign that included a visual and text history of the organization and information on upcoming 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary events.
- **Sponsorship Advertisements:** Space in event publications was maximized with visibility to our 50<sup>th</sup> milestone.
- **Press Releases and Media Outreach:** Subject matter experts interviewed in the media were instructed to mention our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary during all interviews or at all events where a VH speaker was appointed throughout the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year.
- **Social Media:** All profile photos were updated to our 50<sup>th</sup> logo and the “Fun Fact” Campaign launched to bring awareness to our mission and strategic focus in the future.
- **Signage:** Branded 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary signage was displayed on all Virginia Housing office buildings across the state and street signage was deployed in key markets.

### **Internal Communications and Employee Engagement**

The campaign was a key factor in the success of integrating associates back into the office environment and highlighting the employee experience after introducing a hybrid work environment post-pandemic.

- **50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Swag Bags:** Upon returning to the office to a hybrid work schedule, associates were greeted with branded bags of goodies.
- **Fond Memories Videos:** The Communications team recorded associates and pulled together a compilation videos of their favorite memories throughout their time at the organization.
- **Internal Event Integration:** Associates Meetings for 2022-2023 included 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary messaging, such as the Fond Memories videos mentioned above, and special introductions and speaking points from executives about our history and future strategic objectives in the coming years.
- **Internal Communications Efforts:** Our internal communications publication, The Press, featured special announcements about the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary and coordinating events.

### **Special Events**

*The “Power of Home” Digital Art Contest:* As part of our 50th anniversary celebration, Virginia Housing sponsored a “Power of Home” art contest to help raise awareness about the importance of affordable housing. The contest, open to all Virginians, awarded a total of \$20,000 to multiple winners across three categories – school-age students, adult amateurs and adult professionals. Digital submissions were accepted from August 1, 2022 to October 15, 2022. Virginia residents were invited to create and submit up to three digital images of one piece of original art that represents what the “Power of Home” means to them. Acceptable 2D and 3D mediums for the original piece included painting (oil, watercolor, acrylic, pastel), pen and ink, marker, crayon, photography, sculpture, mixed media, charcoal, digital paintings, and drawings.

Over 175 submissions were received in total over the three categories. Artwork was showcased via television screens in a special event room at the Virginia Governor’s Housing Conference in November 2022 and attendees of the conference voted on their favorite works of art.

### **Additional Investments in Key Partnerships**

*The Virginia House Grant Events:* Virginia Housing’s Communications team worked with all five Habitat partners for over a year (ongoing) to plan and implement communications efforts for each home and family. Among the events that have happened or are planned to happen as the homes wrap up in summer 2023, are groundbreaking days, open houses and dedication days. The events are centered around the strong partnership between Virginia Housing and Habitat for Humanity, but also put a strong focus on the families who have taken the steps necessary to move into their new homes. During the events, the Communications team gathers video and photo footage to tell the story of each family and their journey to moving into their new homes. A subject matter expert speaks on our behalf during each event. Media is invited and in attendance for these events. Thus far, one Habitat home has been constructed and dedicated to its new family. By September 2023, all five homes will have been constructed and dedication events will take place.

*The Virginia House Grant* gave \$1.2 million in additional funding to Habitat for Humanity and has assisted five Habitat for Humanity affiliates in the construction of a single-family home designated to

assist a partner family in the improvement of their shelter conditions. Habitat is a strong partner with a successful building model. We allowed Habitat the flexibility of requesting funds for construction, down payment assistance and closing cost, which meant they could leverage our funds with other resources or just use our resource for the home. Grant funds support the construction costs and/or subsidize the loan cost so the family can qualify for a mortgage for the home. In addition, the Virginia House Grant included coverage for a sustainability fund. The sustainability fund allows the Habitat to prevent mortgage delinquencies through emergency assistance for habitat homeowners facing a financial hardship. The habitat affiliate has the flexibility to structure a stability fund to address the financial needs of their borrowers.

## Why is our campaign meritorious and how does it meet NCSHA award judging criteria?

---

### Replicable

- The campaign followed a strategic process that can be easily replicated with other marketing and event campaigns in the future. By outlining key audiences and end goals with processes along the way, we are able to take this model and apply it to future efforts.

### Engage Target Audiences

- Our campaign has engaged our associates, partners, stakeholders, the media and the general public through our multiple avenues of internal and external communications efforts. By including these audiences in our initiatives, we were able to engage them and have them participate with us.

### Achieve Measurable Results

- We measured results in the four key components of the campaign based upon employee participation at events, partner participation, media pickup of pitched stories and the amount of homes we were able to help fund with our grants.

### Provide Benefits that Outweigh Costs

- The engagement that we were able to achieve internally and externally outweighed the costs that were put forward.

### Demonstrate Effective Use of Resources

- Staffing and financial resources were distributed for each initiative with the goal of working toward our strategic objectives through our events and outreach.

### Achieve Strategic Objectives

All campaign efforts worked toward our organizational strategic initiatives outlined through 2025.

- Deliver superior, long-term financial operational performance to strengthen achievement of mission.
- Address state housing needs by partnering with the Housing Delivery Network.

## Visual Aids

---

### Logo Design: 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Logo



## Website: 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Landing Page

Virginia Housing

Individuals & Families · Business Partners · About · News · Contact · Login · Q

### Virginia Housing Celebrates

# 50 YEARS

This year marks our 50th anniversary of working in partnership with public and private sectors to help Virginians attain quality, affordable housing.

#### Our History

### 1970s

**1972:** Virginia Housing Development Authority (VHDA) is created by the Commonwealth of Virginia to help Virginians attain quality, affordable housing.

**1975:** Paid off startup costs appropriated by the General Assembly.

**1976:** Began first statewide Rental Assistance Program with Liberty Manor. Also established the Congregate Housing Program for Virginians with mental disabilities.

### “Virginia House” Grant

Virginia Housing is collaborating with Habitat for Humanity affiliates in support of their work to eliminate substandard housing. We awarded \$1.2M in “Virginia House” grant funds that will build homes and communities in five of Virginia’s localities.

[Read more about our Virginia House grant here.](#)

### More About Our History

Virginia Housing was created as a self-supporting public-private partnership by the Virginia General Assembly in 1972. For 50 years, our mission has been unwavering: to help Virginians attain quality, affordable housing.

We accomplish our mission without the use of state taxpayer dollars — instead, we issue bonds to fund our affordable mortgages for homebuyers and developers of quality rental housing. We also teach free classes for first-time homebuyers, and help people with disabilities and the elderly make their homes more livable. We work with lenders, Realtors, developers, local governments, community service organizations and many others who share our mission.

With the support of so many partners, we’ve accomplished much in the last 50 years to make housing more affordable in Virginia, and we look forward to the next 50 years.



[Visit Page](#)

### Video: 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary



[View Video](#)

### eNewsletter



### August 2022



#### Message from Susan Dewey, CEO

Greetings, Housing Partners! As we near the end of summer and look forward to fall, our 50th anniversary celebration is in full swing! As part of that celebration, we're sponsoring a "Power of Home" art contest for Virginians of all ages and skill levels — and there will be cash prizes! Please help us spread the word, and get your entries in by Oct. 15. We can't wait to see your creativity!

[Learn More & Submit Entries](#)

---

#### Through the Years with Virginia Housing

Check out our timeline with photos from the past five decades.

[VirginiaHousing.com/Celebrate50](https://VirginiaHousing.com/Celebrate50)



**Press Release**



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
11.22.22

**CONTACT: Adrian Robinett**  
(c) 276-971-0494  
Adrian.Robinett@virginiahousing.com

## **Virginia Housing Awards \$1.2 Million Grant to Habitat for Humanity**

**RICHMOND, VA-** In celebration of Virginia Housing's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the Authority is collaborating with Habitat for Humanity affiliates in their work to increase affordable housing by supplying a total of \$1.2 M in grant funds that will build homes and communities in five of Virginia's localities.

"The Virginia House" grant will assist five Habitat for Humanity affiliates in the construction of a single-family home designated to assist a family in achieving their goal of a safe, sustainable residence. Grant funds will support construction costs and loan subsidy, making homeownership affordable for the Habitat buyer. In addition, Virginia Housing included funds to create a sustainability fund. The sustainability fund allows the Habitat to prevent mortgage delinquencies through emergency assistance for Habitat homeowners facing a financial hardship. The Habitat affiliate has the flexibility to structure a stability fund to address the financial needs of their borrowers.

"The initiative for Virginia Housing to partner with Habitat for Humanity across Virginia for these homes furthers our mission of creating affordable, sustainable housing in all areas of the state. We look forward to each project and the positive impact it will have on the families and communities involved," said Susan Dewey, CEO of Virginia Housing.

"For decades, Virginia Housing has partnered with Habitat for Humanity affiliates across Virginia in a variety of creative ways that have helped many hard-working low income Virginians achieve their dream of home ownership." said Overton McGehee, Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity Virginia. "We are honored to be included in their 50th Anniversary Celebration."

###

**Partnership Efforts**

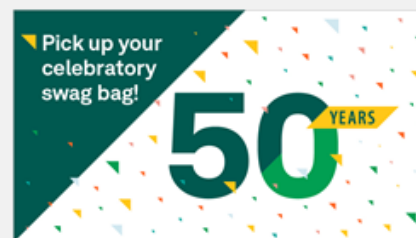


### Associate Swag Giveaway Event



### Let's Celebrate!

In honor of Virginia Housing's 50th anniversary, we're giving away anniversary swag to eligible Virginia Housing associates (full-time, part-time, interns and PSTs). The Communications team will be handing out swag bags for associates at VHC 1 and 2 in Henrico 1 at VHC 1 on Monday, July 25, from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. We'll be at HQ in the James Room on Thursday, July 28, from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. Please only come get your bag at your primary workplace. So come on down and get your celebration on!



#### The Fine Print:

Only associates are eligible to receive gift bags, and bags are limited to one-per-associate. Associates must come in-person to pick up their bags; no sending someone else to get yours for you. In order to be eligible to receive a gift bag, associates must have been hired on or before July 15, 2022.

**Social Media**



**Housing Honor**



The image shows a Facebook post from the account 'virginiahousing'. At the top left is a '50' anniversary logo and the profile name 'virginiahousing'. The main header of the post is a dark green banner with the Virginia Housing logo and the text 'Celebrating 50 Years'. Below this is a group photograph of approximately 15 people standing in a grand, classical-style interior, likely the Virginia State Capitol, with a large statue in the background. The bottom section of the post is black and contains interaction icons (heart, comment, share), a bookmark icon, and the text: '29 likes', 'virginiahousing The Virginia House issued a Joint Resolution commending Virginia Housing on 50 years of service! We are proud of all we've done over the last half-century, and we look forward to another 50 years of working to secure affordable housing for Virginians! #AffordableHousing #RVA', and the date 'March 14, 2022'.

## Power of Home Art Contest

**POWER**  
of **HOME**  
Art Contest

Virginia Housing | 50 YEARS

**CALLING ALL VIRGINIA ARTISTS!**  
ACCEPTING ENTRIES  
AUG. 1 - OCT. 15, 2022

**ALL AGES.**  
**\$20,000**  
**IN CASH**  
**PRIZES!**

Participants will create one piece of original art that represents what the "Power of Home" means to them. Acceptable 2D and 3D mediums for the original piece include painting (oil, watercolor, acrylic, pastel), pen and ink, marker, crayon, photography, sculpture, mixed media, charcoal, digital paintings, and drawings.

**FOR COMPLETE DETAILS**  
Visit [VirginiaHousing.com/Celebrate50](https://VirginiaHousing.com/Celebrate50) or scan this QR code to review the rules and submission information.

## CBS6 News in Richmond

ON-AIR > VIRGINIA THIS MORNING

[f](#) [t](#) [e](#)

### Virginia Housing presents "Power of Home" Digital Art Contest

**Watch Virginia This Morning weekdays at 9 a.m. on CBS 6!**

Today, Adrian Robinett, Public Relations Manager for Virginia Housing joined us to share more about their "Power of Home" Digital Art Contest.

### Contest Setup



## Winners Announced (Video)

### "Power of Home" Art Contest Winners

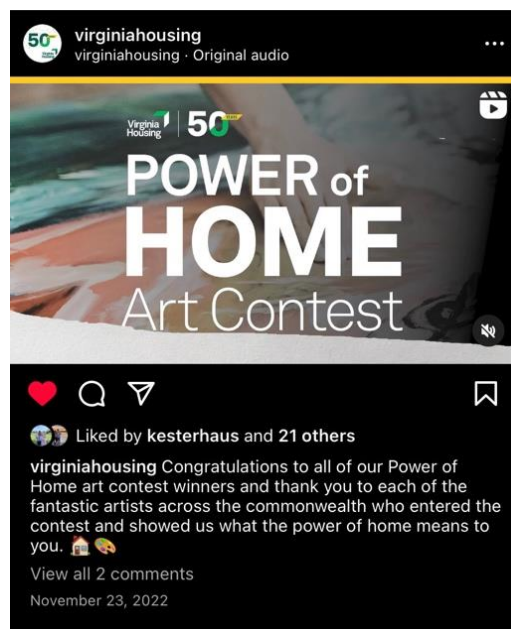


As part of our 50th anniversary celebration, we sponsored a "Power of Home" art contest to help raise awareness about the importance of affordable housing. The contest, open to all Virginians, awarded a total of \$20,000 to multiple winners across three categories – school-age students, adult amateurs and adult professionals.

Congratulations to all the winners, and thank you to all the artists who participated.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/FSc1xINRmxY?rel=0&autoplay=1&loop=1&playlist=FSc1xINRmxY>

## Social





**Holiday E-Card**



[View Video](#)

**Sponsorship Advertisements**

A large graphic celebrating Virginia Housing's 50th anniversary. It features a thick green border. The number '50' is rendered in a large, dark green, sans-serif font. A yellow banner with the word 'YEARS' in dark green capital letters is attached to the right side of the '0'. The background is white with scattered, colorful confetti in shades of green, yellow, orange, and red. Below the '50 YEARS' text, there are two paragraphs of text in a dark green, sans-serif font. In the bottom left corner, there is a small icon of a house with the text 'REAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY' underneath. In the bottom right corner, the Virginia Housing logo is displayed, consisting of the words 'Virginia Housing' in a dark green, sans-serif font next to a stylized green and white house icon.

**50 YEARS**

We're celebrating our 50th year! At Virginia Housing, our mission has always been helping Virginians attain quality, affordable housing. For some, that means an affordable apartment close to work; for others, it might mean buying their very first home.

Learn about our grants, loans and educational programs at [VirginiaHousing.com](https://www.virginiahousing.com).

 REAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

**Virginia Housing** 

## Building Signage



[View Video](#)